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MIXED MARRIAGE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

CHANGING WINDS

"It is rich in various knowledge and sympathy."
—*New Statesman*

ALICE AND A FAMILY. A Story of South London.

"This first rate comedy. And it is first rate not simply because it is extremely entertaining, but because the material out of which this gay entertainment is fashioned, is so very much more than jokes and crotchets. It has a distinctive and decisive reality."—*Manchester Guardian.*

MRS. MARTIN'S MAN

"This book is most amazingly good. It is real and alive and feeling all through."—*H. G. Wells.*

JOHN FERGUSON. A Play in Four Acts.

MIXED MARRIAGE

BY ST. JOHN G. ERVINE

Grea

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RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C.1
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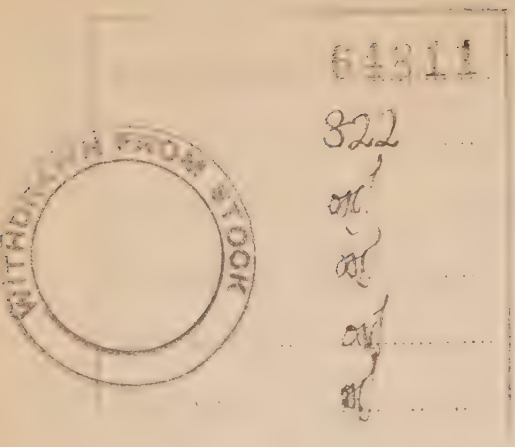

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TO NORA

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

JOHN RAINEY
MRS. RAINEY, *His Wife*
HUGH RAINEY } *His Sons*
TOM RAINEY }
MICHAEL O'HARA
NORA MURRAY

The scene is laid in the kitchen of a workman's home midway between the Falls Road and the Shankill Road, Belfast, in the year 190—.

MIXED MARRIAGE

ACT I

SCENE.—*It is the evening of a warm summer day at the beginning of July. The living room of* JOHN RAINEY'S *house, by reason of the coal-fire burning in the open grate, is intolerably heated; to counteract this, the door leading to the street is partly open, and the scullery door, leading to the yard, is open to its widest. Near the fireplace, above which is suspended a portrait of King William the Third in the act of crossing the Boyne, a plain deal table, covered with dark-coloured American cloth, stands. It is laid for the evening meal. At the fire, placing a plateful of buttered toast on the fender, is* MRS. RAINEY, *a slight, gentle woman, patient with the awful patience of a woman who has always submitted to her husband's will, without ever respecting him. Whilst she is completing the preparations for the meal, the street door is pushed hurriedly open, and* JOHN RAINEY, *dirty from his labor, enters. He is grey-haired, but not bald; he speaks with the quick accent of one used to being obeyed.*

RAINEY. Is the tay ready?

MRS. RAINEY. It'll be ready in a minute! Ye'll have to wait til Tom an' Hughie come in.

RAINEY. What are they not here fur? They haven't anny fardher nor me to come, an' A'm here afore them. An' me an ould man an' all.

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, now don't be puttin' yerself out. Sure, they'll be here in a minute or two. Gw'on into the scullery now an' wash yerself.

RAINEY. Has the wee boy wi' the *Tellygraph* come yit?

MRS. RAINEY. He'll be here in a minit. Lord bless us, ye're in a quare hurry the night.

RAINEY. He's always late, that wee lad!

MRS. RAINEY. Wus there annythin' pertickler ye wur wantin' t' see in it?

RAINEY. Ay, about the strack.

MRS. RAINEY. The strack! Ye're not out on strack, John?

RAINEY. Ay, we come out this avenin'.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, God help us, this is tarrible!

RAINEY. It's goan t' be a long job too, A can tell ye. The masters an' the men are determined.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye nivir tould me there was goan t' be a strack.

RAINEY. Och, what wud a lock o' weemen want t' be talkin' about stracks fur. What do they know about it?

MRS. RAINEY. It's on'y us that does know about it. It's us that has t' kape the heart in you while it's on.

RAINEY. Aw, now, hould yer tongue! You weemen are always down in the mouth about somethin'. Ye wud think t' hear ye talkin' we come out on strack fur the fun o' the thing. It's no joke, A can tell ye!

MRS. RAINEY. It is not, indeed.

RAINEY (*taking off his coat and loosening his waistcoat*). Where's the towel?

MRS. RAINEY. Behin' the scullery door.

(*He goes into the scullery, and the noise of great splashing is heard whilst he washes himself. A newspaper boy is heard coming down the street, crying "Telly-ger-ah!" He flings a paper into the little porch, utters his cry in the door, and passes on.* MRS. RAINEY *goes to the door and picks the paper up. As she does so, her son,* TOM, *appears in the doorway. They enter the kitchen together.*

TOM. Is that you, Ma?

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, Tom! Where's Hughie?

TOM. Och, he's away after them Sinn Feiners. He'll be here in a wee while. Is me da in yet?

(JOHN RAINEY *appears, towelling himself vigorously.*

RAINEY. So ye're here at last, are ye? Kapin' the tay waitin'!

TOM. Och, sure, A cudden help it. A wus wi' Hughie!

RAINEY Ay, ye're sure t' be late if ye're wi' him. Where's he?

TOM. A left him in Royal Avenue talkin' to Michael O'Hara.

RAINEY. What, thon Papish fella?

TOM. Ay, they went intil the Sinn Feiners' Hall thegither. (*He sits down and takes off his boots.*) He'll not be long. (*He takes off his coat and loosens his waistcoat.*)

RAINEY. A don't like Hughie goin' after Papishes. He knows a quare lock o' them.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, now, what harm is there in that. A'm sure Micky O'Hara's as nice a wee fella as ye cud wish t' meet.

RAINEY. Aw, A've nathin' agenst him, but A don't like Cathliks an' Prodesans mixin' thegither. No good ivir comes o' the like o' that.

(TOM *goes into the scullery where the splashing noise is renewed.*

MRS. RAINEY. They'll have to mix in heaven, John.

RAINEY. This isn't heaven.

MRS. RAINEY. Indeed, that's true. What wi' stracks an' one thing an' another, it might be hell.

RAINEY. There's no peace where Cathliks an' Prodesans gits mixed up thegither. Luk at the way the Cathliks carry on on the Twelfth o' July. Ye have t'have the peelers houlin' them back for fear they'd make a riot. D'ye call that respectable or dacent?

MRS. RAINEY. Well, God knows, they git plenty of provokin'. What wi' them men that prache at the Custom House Steps an' yer or'nge arches an' the way the *Tellygraph* is always goin' on at them, A wonder they don't do more nor they do.

RAINEY. Aw, ye wur always one fur Cathliks!

MRS. RAINEY. A belave in lavin' people alone. Come on, an' have yer tay fur dear sake. Sure ye'd go on talkin' fur a lifetime if A wus to let ye.

RAINEY. Are ye not goin' t' wait fur Hughie ?

MRS. RAINEY. No, ye'd better have yours now : he'll have his when he comes in.

(*They sit down and begin the meal.*

RAINEY. Dear on'y knows when that'll be, runnin' after a lock o' Socialists an' Cathliks ?

MRS. RAINEY. He's not runnin' after Socialists. It's Sinn Feiners he's runnin' after.

RAINEY. They're the same thing. Sinn Feiners are all Socialists. That fella, Michael O'Hara, what d'ye think he said when A asked him what way o' thinkin' he was ?

MRS. RAINEY. A don't know, A'm sure.

RAINEY. A'm a member o' the Independent Labour Party, ses he, the I. L. P. A Socialist Society—that's what it is. Did ye ivir hear the like o' that ?

MRS. RAINEY. Och, A've heerd worse. A've heerd o' stracks.

RAINEY. There ye go again. What can we do ? Sure, the masters is not payin' us fair, an' there's no other way o' makin' them.

(TOM *re-enters the kitchen and completes his toilet in front of the small looking-glass hanging on the wall.*

Is there, Tom ?

TOM. Sure, I don't know anythin' about it.

RAINEY. Naw, ye're ignorant, that's what ye are. A great big fella like you, an' don't know that yit. Ye think o' nathin but goin' up the road of an avenin' after a lot o' girls.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, sure ye wur the same yerself when ye wur his age. Come on an' have yer tay, Tom.

RAINEY. The young men o' this day don't think enough. There's not one o' them knows a thing about the battle o' the Boyne. What happened on the first day o' July in the year sixteen hundred and ninety, will ye tell me that, now ?

(TOM *sits at the table.*

TOM. Aw, fur dear sake, hould yer tongue. A left school long ago.

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe some ould men lost their tempers.

RAINEY. Ay, ye can make fun, but it was the gran' day fur Englan' an' Irelan' that wus, when William o' Or'nge driv Popery out o' Irelan'.

TOM. He didden drive it far. Sure, there's plenty o' Papishes in Bilfast, an' there's more o' them in Irelan' nor Prodesans.

MRS. RAINEY. A can't help thinkin' it's their country we've got.

RAINEY. Their country indeed! What d'ye think 'ud become o' us if this wur their country? There isn't a Prodesan in Irelan' wud be left alive.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, now, don't tell us the like o' that, for sure it's not true. Cathliks is jus' like wurselves, as good as we are an' as bad as we are, an' no worse. A wish to me goodness ye wudden go to the Custom House Steps if that's the soart o' nonsense they tache ye.

RAINEY. A don't nade t' be taught it—A know it. A've read a bit in me time. Did ye ivir read the history o' Maria Monk?

TOM. Sure, Hughie ses that's all lies.

RAINEY. Lies, does he call it? What does he know about it? That's what comes thrum associatin' wi' Tagues. He'll be disbelievin' the Bible nixt.

(*A knock is heard on the door, and a voice cries, "Are ye in, Mrs. Rainey?"*

MRS. RAINEY. Aye, A am.

(*Enter* NORA MURRAY, *a good-looking, intelligent, dark-haired girl of twenty-four.*

Och, is that yerself, Nora? Sure, come on in.

NORA. Good avenin', Mr. Rainey.

RAINEY. Good avenin'.

NORA. How ir ye, Tom.

TOM. A'm bravely, thank ye, Nora.

NORA. Is Hugh in?

MRS. RAINEY. He's not home yet, but he'll be here in a wee minute. Have ye had yer tay?

NORA. Aye, A have, thank ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, ye cud take a wee drap more, cudden ye ?

NORA. Aw, no, thank ye. A'm on'y after havin' it.

TOM. Gw'on an' have a drap 'er that.

NORA. Och, A cud not indeed.

RAINEY. There's no good askin' her if she won't have it.

NORA. Is it true about the strack.

RAINEY. It is.

NORA. Dear-a-dear, but it's a quare pity.

RAINEY. Aw, you weemen are all the same. Ye're always lukkin' on the black side o' things, an' complainin'.

MRS. RAINEY. There's nathin' but black sides to stracks.

TOM. Aw, there's a bright side, too. Ye don't have to git up so early in the mornin'.

RAINEY. Ye'll git up at the same time the morra mornin', strack or no strack. It wudden take you long t' git out o' the habit o' gettin' up early.

NORA. There'll be the quare distress in Belfast. It wus awful the last time.

RAINEY. There's always distress fur the like o' us sometime or other.

NORA. Indeed, that's true.

MRS. RAINEY. There ought to be some other way o' settlin' these things nor stracks. It's wicked, that's what it is, an' it's the weemen that has to bear the worst o' it. Aw, yes, indeed it is. You men don't have to face the rent agent an' the grocer wi' no money.

RAINEY. We all have to take our share, don't we ?

MRS. RAINEY. Some have to take more nor their share. (*To Nora*) Are ye goan up the road wi' Hughie the night, Nora ?

NORA (*somewhat embarrassed*). No, A jus' come in t' ask him about the strack.

RAINEY. Well, ye've heerd about it.

NORA (*in greater confusion*). Yes, A'll jus' be goin' now.

MRS. RAINEY. Fur dear sake, don't take any notis o' him. Sure, he's not beside himself the night. Jus' sit

down there, an' wait till Hughie comes. He's a long time. (*She goes to the door and looks out.*) He's not in sight. Come on an' we'll walk til the head o' the street an' see if he's comin'.

NORA. Ay, A will.

(NORA *and* MRS. RAINEY *go out at the street door.*

RAINEY. Is Hughie goin' out wi' that girl ?

TOM. Aw, he walks up the road wi' her, but sure he done that often enough wi' other girls. He's a great boy fur girls.

RAINEY What religion is she ?

TOM (*uneasily*). A'm not sure.

RAINEY. She's got a Papish name. There's many a Fenian be the name o' Murray.

TOM. Sure, what differs does it make if she is a Cathlik. She's a brave, nice wee girl.

RAINEY. A wudden have a son o' mine marry a Cathlik fur all the wurl. A've nathin' agin the girl, but A believe in stickin' t' yer religion. A Cathlik's a Cathlik, an' a Prodesan's a Prodesan. Ye can't get over that.

TOM. Och, sure, they're all the same. Ye cudden tell the differs atween a Cathlik an' a Prodesan if ye met them in the street an' didden know what their religion wus. A'm not one fur marryin' out o' my religion meself, but A'm no bigot. Nora Murray's a fine wumman.

RAINEY. Fine or no fine, she's a Cathlik, an' A'll nivir consent til a son o' mine marryin' her.

TOM. What are ye goan t' do about the strack ?

RAINEY. Do ! What shud A do ? Take me share in it the same's the rest o' ye ! The workin' class has got t' hing thegither.

TOM. It's a tarrible pity we can't get our work done dacently. Nathin' but a lot o' fightin' an' wranglin'.

RAINEY. Ay, it's a rotten way to git through the wurl'. fightin' over ha'pennies. Us wantin' a penny an hour more, an' the masters not willin' t' give it to us. Och, ay, it's wrong. Wrong, wrong !

(*Re-enter* MRS. RAINEY.

MRS. RAINEY. Hughie's comin' down the street, now. He's got O'Hara wi' him.

RAINEY. Huh ! more Cathliks ! Where's that girl gone ?

MRS. RAINEY. A toul her t' go on an' meet them. She'll come in wi' them in a minit.

RAINEY. A'm surprised at ye encouragin' her. A Cathlik !

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, fur dear sake, houl' yer wheesht. Ye've got Cathlik on the brain.

RAINEY. A'm agin mixed marriages, d'ye hear ?

(*Enter* HUGH RAINEY, MICHAEL O'HARA, *and* NORA. *Greetings, surly on the part of old* RAINEY.

MRS. RAINEY. Have ye had yer tay, Michael ?

HUGH. No, indeed, he hasn't, ma, an' A brought him here t' have it.

MICHAEL. Och, now, Mrs. Rainey, don't put yerself til any bother. Sure, A'll git it whin A go home.

MRS. RAINEY. It's no bother at all, Michael. It's on'y t' git down a cup an' sasser. Sure, there's plenty, an' yer welcome to it.

MICHAEL. It's very kind o' ye, A'm sure.

(HUGH *and he sit down at the table together.* NORA *and* TOM *sit talking together on the sofa.* RAINEY *is seated before the fire reading the "Evening Telegraph."*

MRS. RAINEY. Nora, come up here an' have a cup o' tay.

NORA. Aw, indeed A cuddent, Mrs. Rainey, thank ye. A've just had it.

HUGH. Ah, come on, an' keep Michael an' me company. Sure, ye can always drink tay.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, come on. We'll not take "no" fur an answer.

RAINEY. Sure, if the girl dussen want it . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, you go on readin' yer paper.

(NORA *joins* HUGH *and* MICHAEL *at the table.*

HUGH. Da, we wur wantin' t' have a bit o' a talk wi' ye, Michael an' me, about the strack.

RAINEY. Wur ye ?

HUGH. Ay, we wur. We wur thinkin' ye might give us a great dale o' help.

MICHAEL. Ye see, Mr. Rainey, ye're a man that's held in great respect be the men, Cathliks an' Prodesans.

RAINEY. A've always tried t' live a straight life an' do me duty by my fellow men.

MICHAEL. Indeed, A know that quare an' well, Mr. Rainey. Ye're a man that's alwis bin thought a great dale of. Well, Hugh an' me's bin talkin' this matter over, an' we've come til the conclusion that the great danger o' this strack is that the workers may get led astray be religious rancour. There's bin attempts made in that direction already.

HUGH. Ay, did ye see that bit in the *Telly* the night about Nationalists breedin' discontent among the peaceable people o' Bilfast ?

RAINEY. Naw, A've not read it yit. (*Looking at the paper.*) Is this it ? (HUGH *looks at the paper.*) This bit.

HUGH. Ay, that. (*Reads.*) " We feel sure that the loyal peace-abiding Protestants of this, the greatest commercial city in Ireland, will not allow themselves to be led astray by Nationalist agitators from Dublin, and that they will see that their true interests lie in the same direction as those of their employers. We should be the last to encourage religious strife, but we would remind our readers, the loyal Orangemen of Ulster, that the leaders of this strike are Roman Catholics and Home Rulers." There's a nice thing fur ye. There's a lot o' fools in this town'll swallow that balderdash like anything.

MICHAEL. Ye see, Mr. Rainey, it's a fact that the leaders are mostly Cathliks, but that dussent mane anything at all, on'y there's some people'll think that it manes that the Pope'll arrive here next week an' ordher all the Prodesans t' be slaughtered. Now, Hugh an' me thought if you wur t' come an' take a leadin' part in the strack it wud show that Cathliks an' Prodesans wus workin' han' in han' fur the same object. D'ye see ?

RAINEY. Ay, A see right enough.

HUGH. D'ye agree wi' it, father. ?

RAINEY. A'm no sure. It wants thinkin' about.

MRS. RAINEY. What thinkin' does it want to stan' thegither ?

TOM. Sure, ye've on'y got to go on the platform an' say we're all in the same boat.

RAINEY. What d'you know about it ? You're on'y a bit o' a lad.

TOM (*sulkily*). Mebbe A know more'n some people think A do.

RAINEY. Ay, an' mebbe ye don't know s' much as ye think ye do.

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, well, mebbe atween the two he knows a brave bit ? Are ye ready fur some more tay, Michael ?

MICHAEL. Aw, sure A'm done, Mrs. Rainey, thank ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, indeed, ye're not. Sure, that's no tay fur a man.

MICHAEL. Aw, now, A've done rightly, thank ye. A cudden take another drap.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, A wunt coax ye, ye know.

MICHAEL. Aw, A wudden say " no " jus' fur the sake o' bein' polite.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, if ye're done, A'll jus' redd away these dishes an' things.

NORA (*rising*). Let me do it, Mrs. Rainey.

MRS. RAINEY. Indeed A will not. Sit down there an' rest yerself. Sure ye've bin at yer work all day.

NORA. Well, ye can let me help ye, anny way ?

MRS. RAINEY (*smiling at her*). Well, mebbe A will. Come on intil the scullery an' we'll wash up the dishes while these men have their crack.

(MRS. RAINEY *and* NORA *remove the dishes and tea-things to the scullery : they pass in and out of the kitchen to the scullery, during a part of the following scene, but when all the tea-things have been removed, they remain in the scullery and the noise of dishes being washed is heard.*

RAINEY. Where is this meetin' to take place ?

MICHAEL. Well, we wur thinkin' o' St. Mary's Hall.

RAINEY. What!

HUGH. Sure, what does it matter where it takes place?

RAINEY. A Cathlik hall like that where Home Rulers always go?

HUGH. It's the only hall we can git. Sure, we'd take the Ulster on'y they wudden let us have it.

TOM. Ye cud have it at the Custom House Steps. Ye cud git more people there.

MICHAEL. We wur thinkin' o' that.

RAINEY. A wudden go anear St. Mary's Hall.

HUGH. Wud ye go til the Steps, then?

RAINEY. Ay, A might do that.

MICHAEL. Then we'll have it there. Man, Mr. Rainey, A'm quare an' glad ye're willin' till speak. It's a fine thing. Think o' it. Here's a chance t' kill bigotry and make the men o' Bilfast realise that onderneath the Cathlik an' the Prodesan there's the plain workin' man.

HUGH. Ay, that's it. They're jus' the same onderneath. They need the same food an' shelter an' clo'es, an' they suffer the same wrongs. The employers don't give a man better wages fur bein' a Prodestan or a Cathlik, do they?

RAINEY. That's true enough.

MICHAEL. A tell ye, Mr. Rainey, the employers have used religion to throw dust in wur eyes. They're eggin' us on t' fight one another over religion, so's we shan't have time til think about the rotten wages they give us. They set the Cathliks agin the Prodesans, an' the Prodesans agin the Cathliks, so's ye can't git the two to work thegither for the good o' their class. Look at the way it is in the shipyards. Ye git men workin' thegither peaceably all the year til the Twelfth o' July, an' then they start batin' one another fur the love o' God. There's yourself. Ye're a very dacent, intelligent man, but ye're suspicious o' me, an' ye don't like t' see Hugh an' me so chummy as we are, an' all acause A'm a Cathlik an' you an' he are Prodesans.

RAINEY. There's a differs.

MICHAEL. On'y a very little. Look at me. A'm like yerself. A'm a workin' man. A want t' marry an' have a wife an' childher an' keep them an' me dacently, an' A want t' serve God in the way A was brought up. You don't want no more nor that.

TOM. Ay, indeed, that's true. People are all the same the wurl over. They jus' want t' be let alone.

HUGH. Man, da, whin A'm out wi' Mickey, A sometimes think what a fine thing it 'ud be if the workin' men o' Irelan' was to join their han's thegither an' try an' make a great country o' it. There wus a time whin Irelan' wus the islan' o' saints. By God, da, if we cud bring that time back again.

RAINEY. It's a gran' dream.

MICHAEL. To see the streets full o' happy men an' weemen again, their faces shinin' wi' the glory o' the Lord God, an' the childher runnin' about in the sun an' none o' them sick wi' hunger. Aw, if on'y we wud hould thegither an' not be led astray be people that want to keep us apart.

RAINEY. It'll never be. (*Enter* MRS. RAINEY.

MICHAEL. Why not?

RAINEY. There's such a quare differs atween a Cathlik an' a Prodesan.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, sure what differs does it make so long as ye act up til yer religion. (*Enter* NORA.

MICHAEL. That's the God's truth, Mrs. Rainey. When a man's livin' at his best, it dussn't matter how much he starts differently thrum other people that's doin' the same—he gits quare an' like them in the end.

RAINEY. There's a differs.

NORA. Dear, oh, dear, are ye still wranglin' wi' one another? What ones men are fur talkin'.

MRS. RAINEY (*pulling her down beside her on the sofa*). Nivir mind, dear, let them go on talkin'. It keeps them quiet.

ACT II

The SCENE *is the same as in Act I. A week has elapsed. It is the late afternoon.* MRS. RAINEY *is baking bread, there is a "griddle" on the fire, on which lie four baking soda-farls. Every now and then* MRS. RAINEY *leaves the baking-board and goes to the griddle to attend to the farls there.*

(*Her son* HUGH *enters.*

MRS. RAINEY Is that you, Hughie?

HUGH. Ay. (*He draws a chair up to the fire, and takes off his boots. His mother places a pair of carpet slippers by his chair. He puts them on.*) Where's me da?

MRS. RAINEY. He's away out somewhere. He didden say where he wus goan an' A didden ask.

HUGH. Man-a-dear, he spoke quare an' well the day at the Steps. There wus quare cheers fur him whin he got down aff the chair.

MRS. RAINEY. Yer father wus alwis a good speaker.

HUGH. It'll be a fine thing fur him t' be able t' say he wus the man that give bigotry its death in Bilfast. The workin'-class 'll nivir be the same again. They know now that it dussen matter whether yer a Cathlik or a Prodesan, if ye're a workin' man ye're bein' groun' down be the masters.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, Hughie, the masters is not as bad as they're made out t' be. Sure, it's no good callin' people bad names. It's alwis bin like this, an' ye can't expec' people t' change sudden. If ye wur brought up like them ye'd be the same as they are.

HUGH. They haven't got the troubles we have. They nivir see their childher starvin', do they?

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, perhaps they don't git their

trouble jus' like that, but they get it all the same. It's jus' a wee bit different on the outside. Wud ye like a wee drap o' tay an' a bit o' new bread ?

HUGH. A'll wait till ye have it yerself.

MRS. RAINEY. A'll not be long now—the bread's near done.

(She bends over the "griddle," turning the farls, and now and then stands them on their sides so as to brown them all over. Some, baked, she removes, Her son watches her for a while as if anxious to speak to her, but undecided how to begin. She carries the last farl to the table.

HUGH. Will A take the griddle aff fur ye ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, if ye plase. Put it in the scullery.

(He takes the "griddle" out and when he returns stands beside her as she batches the bread.

MRS. RAINEY. Wur ye wantin' t' say anythin' to me, Hughie ?

HUGH (*moving away*). Naw. (*He looks at the fire for a second or two, then turns swiftly to his mother, and puts his arms around her neck.*) Ma, wud ye be vexed if A wus to marry Nora Murray ?

(*She pats him gently.*

MRS. RAINEY. Vexed, dear ?

HUGH. Ay. She's a Cathlik.

MRS. RAINEY. A wudden be vexed at yer marryin' her. A like her quare an' well.

HUGH. But ye wudden like me t' marry a Cathlik ?

MRS. RAINEY. A wus wunnerin', Hughie. It's strange t' think ye shud be wantin' t' marry a-tall. Its—ye wur a wee lad—Ye're a man, Hughie. A har'ly know that yit.

HUGH. It's nacherl fur a man t' marry.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, it's nacherl. It is indeed ! But ye wudden belave the strange it is for all that. A wus a young girl when A had you, Hughie, younger nor Nora, an' A wus quare an' proud o' ye. A . . . (*She sobs a little.*)

HUGH. A've bin a good son t' ye.

MRS. RAINEY (*drying her tears*). Ye have, dear. Ye have that. A'm not complainin'. It's the way o' things.

HUGH. Ye'll not be vexed wi' me.

MRS. RAINEY (*smiling and kissing him*). Vexed wi' ye. Sure, no. What wud A be vexed fur? It's yer father.

HUGH. Ay, A wunner how he'll take it?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're very fond o' her, aren't ye, Hughie?

HUGH. Ay!

MRS. RAINEY. It wud hurt ye not til marry her.

HUGH. It wud.

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe if ye wur t' tell him that . . .

HUGH. She's not goan t' change her religion, an' A'm not goan t' change mine. If there's any childher . . .

MRS. RAINEY. That'll be the test, Hughie.

HUGH. We'll let them choose fur themselves whin they're oul' enough. Aw, Ma, half the religion in the wurl' is like a disease that ye get thrum yer father. A'm a Prodesan acause you an' me da are Prodesans, an' Nora's a Cathlik acause her parents wur Cathliks; an' you an' he are Prodesans acause your da an' ma wur Prodesans, an' they wur Cathliks acause their parents wur Cathliks. A'd like a time til come when a man wus a Cathlik or a Prodesan acause he felt in his sowl it wus the right thing til be.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, indeed. But, man Hughie, whin ye come til bring up yer childher, it's quare how ye don't think like that. It's all right fur you an' her—ye're separate, ye see—but it's different wi' childher. Ye can't say, this chile's me an' that chile's her. They're jus' like as if ye wur both lumped thegither. It's very difficult . . .

HUGH. Ye're not goan back on me, are ye?

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, Hughie. A'm not. A'm on'y tellin' ye that it's not as aisy as ye think it is.

HUGH (*putting his arm around her neck*). Ma, A jus' love her.

MRS. RAINEY. A know, dear.

HUGH. It's like . . . Huh, A dunna how t' say it. It grips ye, an' ye can't houl' out. Aw, an' it hurts . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, it hurts . . .

HUGH. Ye're a quare good wumman, ma. Sometimes A think if it wussen fur you A'd nivir a stapped here wi' him. He's that hard.

(*A knock is heard on the door and the voice of* MICHAEL O'HARA *cries, "Can A come in?"*

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, come on.

(*Enter* MICHAEL.

MICHAEL. How are ye all?

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, sure we're rightly.

MICHAEL. Is Mr. Rainey in?

HUGH. Naw, he's out somewhere.

MICHAEL. Man, Hughie, we'll have til be quare an' careful. That wee man Hart 's bin tryin' t' rouse the Or'ngemen agin the Cathliks. There wus a bit o' a fight last night in North Street, an' a chap cursed the Pope.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear-a-dear, what harm did the poor man do him that he should go an' curse him?

MICHAEL. Ay, indeed, ye're right. There's goan t' be a meetin' o' the Or'ngemen the night; an' Hart 'll be there stirrin 'up bad blood. We must get yer father t' go an' stap him.

HUGH. Aw, he'll go all right. His blood's up, ye know. Once ye set him talkin' it's hard t' stap him. Man, ye did the right thing whin ye toul' him he might be the man til bring bigotry til an end. That plazed him greatly.

MICHAEL. We mussen let thim get fightin' thegither. If we can keep them thegither a while in peace, we'll git what we want thrum the masters; but if they once start fightin' thegither about religion, we'll git nathin'. There 'll be a riot . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, God forbid. A remember the riot in 1883. Aw, dear-a-dear.

HUGH. Did ye see Nora as ye wur comin' up the street?

MICHAEL. Ay, A saw her goan intil a shap as A wus comin' along.

HUGH. Did ye speak til her?

MICHAEL. A toul' her A wus comin' here, an' she toul'

me t' tell ye she'd be here herself afore long. Is Tom home yit ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, he's out in the yard washin' it down.

MICHAEL. A wondher if he'd go an' fin' yer father, Hugh ? Man, we mussen waste a minute.

HUGH (*going to the scullery-door*). Here, Tom ; come on in a minit.

TOM (*from the yard*). What d'ye want ?

HUGH. A want ye a minit.

(TOM, *in his shirt sleeves and with his trousers turned up, enters, carrying a broom.*

TOM. What is it ? . . . Aw, Micky, how're ye ?

MICHAEL. Tom, will ye go an' try an' fin' yer father fur us ?

TOM. Sure, A doan know where he is.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, ye'll fin' him as likely as not at the corner o' the Shankill.

TOM. A haven't finished the yard.

MRS. RAINEY. Hughie 'll do that.

TOM. Why can't he go ?

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, doan't ask no questions an' A'll tell ye no lies. Sure, Nora's comin' in in a minit.

TOM. Well, what's that got t' do wi' it ?

MICHAEL. Gw'on, Tom. A want t' talk t' Hughie fur a while.

TOM. That's the way. All o' ye shovin' ivirything ontil me. Lord save us, ye'd think A wus a chile. Me da talks t' me as if A wus a babby.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, Tom, ye know ye're jus' wantin' t' go, but ye're that contrairy ye pretend ye don't.

TOM. Huh ! Here, gimme me coat an' cap.

(MRS. RAINEY *fetches his coat and cap for him, and he puts himself tidy.*

MICHAEL. Tell him it's quare an' pertickler, Tom.

TOM. Ay ! (*He goes out.*)

HUGH. A've toul' me ma about Nora.

MICHAEL. Eh !

MRS. RAINEY. It's all right, Micky. A'm not the soart o' wumman til git annoyed at the like o' that.

MICHAEL. A know ye're not, Mrs. Rainey. Ye're a fine wumman.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, houl' yer tongue wi' ye.

MICHAEL. Does yer father know ?

HUGH. Naw, not yit.

MICHAEL. D'ye think he'll min' ?

HUGH. A don't know. A'm afeard . . .

MRS. RAINEY. He's a very headstrong man . . .

MICHAEL. What d'ye think he'd do if he knew ?

HUGH. A don't care what he does.

MICHAEL. Ye shudden talk like that, Hugh. Supposin' he wus to turn agin ye ! . . .

HUGH. Let him turn. Me ma won't turn agin me.

MICHAEL. It mightn't be agin you on'y, though ?

HUGH. Eh !

MICHAEL. He might turn agin the Cathliks too ? . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Ye mane he mightn't help ye wi' the strack ?

MICHAEL. Ay, that's just what A mane. Man, Hughie, we mussen run no risks. When wur ye goan t' tell him ?

HUGH. A wus goan t' tell him the day. He knows A go out wi' her, an' that A'm not the soart o' fella that goes up the road wi' a girl jus' t' pass the time.

MRS. RAINEY. He's bin askin' questions about her.

(NORA *knocks at the door, which is opened by* MRS. RAINEY.

Aw, sure, come on in. We wur jus' talkin' about ye.

NORA (*entering*). Wur ye, indeed ? Well, A suppose ye wur pullin' me t' bits ?

HUGH. Ay, we jus' tuk all the character ye have away thrum ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Nora, Hughie's jus' toul' me about you an' him . . .

NORA (*quickly*). Oh, Mrs. Rainey ! . . .

MRS. RAINEY. It's all right, dear. A'm very glad. (*She kisses* NORA.)

MICHAEL. We wur jus' talkin' about tellin' Mr. Rainey, an' wunnerin' what he 'll say ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'd better not tell him til the strack's over. Then ye'll be sure he can't do no harm.

MICHAEL. A wus goan til suggest that, on'y A didden like.

HUGH. Mebbe it wud be as well. Sure it 'll on'y be a week or two.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, ye can go on intil the yard, you two, the pair o' ye, and finish clanin' it, an' me an' Nora 'll have a wee crack thegither.

HUGH. Aw, there ye are, ye see. As soon as ivir two weemen git thegither the men have t' go out fur fear they'd be deaved wi' the talkin'.

NORA. Aw, indeed, if we didden talk thegither, A'm sure A don't know what 'ud become o' the men ?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're right, Nora. It's the weemen that keeps the men thegither if they on'y knew it ?

MICHAEL. Aw, now, don't talk blether.

MRS. RAINEY. Go long wi' ye !

(MICHAEL *and* HUGH *go out laughing.*

NORA. Are ye angry wi' me, Mrs. Rainey ?

MRS. RAINEY. No, Nora, A'm not angry. What wud A be angry fur ?

NORA. Me bein' a Cathlik.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, ye cudden help that annymore nor Hughie cud help bein' a Prodesan. A wud be very angry if ye wurn't able til luk after him.

NORA. A'll do that all right.

MRS. RAINEY. Men make a quare fuss about religion an' wan thing an' another, but A'm thinkin' it's more important fur a wumman t' be able t' make a good dinner fur her man nor t' be able t' pray in the same church. An' sure it's the same God annyway.

NORA. A'll be a good wife t' Hugh.

MRS. RAINEY. A know ye will. It makes a quare differs to a man, that. It's a strange thing marriage.

NORA. Are ye sorry ye're married ?

Mrs. Rainey. No, A'm not. Me an' my man has had our ups an' downs, an' he's a bit domineerin', but A think A'd do it again if A had me life over again. They're strange at first, an' they're not very considerate. They don't ondherstan' weemen . . . but ye git to ondherstan' them soon enough. Ye know, they're quare oul' humbugs when ye know them. They think they're that clivir, an' they make us think it too, at first ; but, sure, ye soon fin' them out. Och, dear, they're jus' like big childher. When Hughie wus a chile, he wus quare an' strong, an' there wus times afore he cud walk whin A cud har'ly houl' him, he wud twist about in me arms that much, an' sometimes A thought the chile imagined he wus more nor me match ; but ye know, dear, A wus takin' care o' him all the time. It wus sore work sometimes, an' his da nivir seemed to ondherstan' that A got tired out ; but, sure, A jus' did it all right. It's the same wi' my man. He twists about an' thinks he's the quare big strong man, but A'm jus' takin' care o' him the same as A did o' Hughie when he wus a chile. Ye'll have t' do the same, Nora : it's the way o' the wurl' wi' weemen.

Nora. It's the quare strange thing a man is. A've felt that meself. Sometimes when A'm up the road wi' Hughie, an' A'm listenin' to him talkin', A think t' meself A'm quare an' beneath him ; but jus' when A'm beginnin' t' feel downhearted about it, he'll mebbe say somethin', an' A know then that A'm not beneath him a-tall, that A'm . . . A don't know how t' say it. . . . It's a quare feelin'.

Mrs. Rainey. A know, A know. Ivry wumman has it sometime or other. Ye jus' feel that men are not near as clivir as they think they are, an' ye're not sarry fur it.

Nora. Ay, ye feel quare an' glad. Ye wud think mebbe ye'd be disappointed at fin'in' them out ; but ye're not.

Mrs. Rainey. They're jus' childher. Manny a time, whin A'm sittin' here darnin' the socks, A think that God made us acause He saw what a chile a man is. He jus' made us til luk after them.

NORA. A often think that about Hughie. There's times an' times whin A jus' want t' gether him up in me arms, an' houl' him til me tight, an' put him t' sleep. . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, Ay! An' yer chile hurts ye thrum the minit it's born til the minit it dies. It's not like that wi' a man, dear. A man's nivir tied til a chile like a wumman! . . . It's different in a man. He can take a pride in his chile. If it does well, his pride is plazed, an' if it doesn't his pride is hurt; but a wumman feels it tuggin' inside her. . . . Aw, dear, dear, what are we talkin' like this fur? Sure, the men 'll be in in a minit, an' we'll have til take care o' them, an' not be worryin' about wurselves.

NORA. Will A go an' see if they're finished in the yard yit?

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, do.

(NORA *kisses her, and* MRS. RAINEY *hugs the girl to her tightly.* NORA *goes out by the scullery, and* MRS. RAINEY *brings an armchair forward to the fire, and begins to darn socks. In a little while the street door opens, and* TOM, *followed by his father, enters.*

TOM. Here's me da.

RAINEY. Ay, A hear they want me.

MRS. RAINEY. Yes. They're out in the yard now. Tom, tell them.

(TOM *goes to the scullery and calls the others in.* Nora Murray's wi' them.

RAINEY. What's she doin' there?

MRS. RAINEY. She jus' come in til have a crack wi' me.

RAINEY. Huh! It's a funny way o' havin' it fur her t' be out in the yard wi' Hughie, an' you t' be darnin' socks in the kitchen.

MRS. RAINEY. We've had it, man, dear. Weemin dussen take s' long over their talkin' as men?

(*Enter* TOM, NORA, MICHAEL, *and* HUGH *in the order named.*

NORA. Good-evenin', Mr. Rainey.

RAINEY (*shortly*). Good-evenin'. (*To* MICHAEL.) Ye wur wantin' me?

MICHAEL. A wus.

NORA. A'll have t' be goin' now.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, ye're in no hurry. Stap an' take a drap o' tay wi' us.

NORA. Aw, indeed, A must go home.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're sure?

NORA. A am, indeed.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, mebbe Hughie 'll see ye home.

HUGH. A wus jus' goin' t' siggest that.

RAINEY. Sure, it's not dark.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, man-a-dear, don't ye know at this time o' year it gits dark quare an' sudden. A'm sure, Michael wants t' have a quiet talk wi' ye. Tom, A want ye t' go roun' til the grocer's fur me.

(HUGH *and* NORA *get ready to go.*

TOM. Can't Hughie do it on the way back.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, he can't.

TOM. It's alwis me.

RAINEY. Do as yer ma tells ye, an' don't give no back answers.

TOM. Luk here, da, A'm not goin' til be spoke t' like that.

RAINEY. Houl' yer tongue, will ye?

MRS. RAINEY. Tom, dear, come here.

HUGH. Well, we'll go now. A'll be back afore long, Michael.

NORA. Good-night t' ye, Mrs. Rainey.

MRS. RAINEY. Good-night t' ye, Nora.

NORA. Good-night t' ye all.

ALL. Good-night.

TOM. Wait a minit, an' A'll come wi' ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, A'm not ready fur ye.

(*Exit* NORA *and* HUGH.

TOM (*quietly to his mother*). Ye might ha' let me go wi' them. It wud ha' bin comp'ny.

MRS. RAINEY (*very quietly*). Haven't ye got no sense, man?

MICHAEL. Ye heerd tell o' this meetin' o' the Or'ngemen, A suppose? Hart 's comin' thrum Dublin til address it.

RAINEY. Ay, A met the Worshipful Master on the Shankill the day, an' he toul' me about it.

MICHAEL. Hart 'll stir up bitterness atween the Cathliks an' the Prodesans if he's let have his way.

MRS. RAINEY. A don't like that wee man.

TOM. He makes his livin' out o' breedin' bigotry.

RAINEY. What d'you know about it? Let me tell you he's a man that's done good work fur the Prodesan religion.

TOM. It's not good work t' be settin' men fightin' wi' wan another.

RAINEY. Houl' yer tongue. Ye dunna what ye're talkin' about.

TOM. Well, if A'm not wanted here, A'm goin' out. It's no pleasure t' me t' stay here wi' a lotta nirpin' goin' on.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye can jus' go til the grocer's now. (*Pats him on the back.*) Nivir mind, Tom. Sure, he dussen mean half he says. (*She speaks in undertones to* TOM, *who presently puts on his cap and goes out.*)

MICHAEL. D'ye think ye cud go up til the meetin', Mr. Rainey, the morra, an' counteract Hart's influence? Ye know the men think a lot o' yer opinion.

RAINEY. A might go.

MICHAEL. Ye will, wun't ye? A can't go meself, A'm a Cathlik, an' Hughie can't, he's not an Or'nge-man . . .

MRS. RAINEY. It wud be a pity t' spoil the good effect ye've made at the last minit.

MICHAEL. It wud, indeed, Mrs. Rainey. We're doin' so well. . . . Aw, if that man Hart wud on'y stay away. . . . It's enough t' break yer heart whin ye've bin tryin' as hard as ye can til do somethin', an' someone comes whin ye've near done it, an' pushes it over.

RAINEY. Ay, it is that.

MRS. RAINEY. The quare good work in the wurl' that's bin spoiled be liars an' fools.

MICHAEL. It's tarrible t' think, Mr. Rainey, that you an' me shud be sittin' here doin' wur best t' put things right, an' all the time there's a man comin' thrum Dublin til spoil it all.

MRS. RAINEY. They're alwis comin', them people, be express trains. They travel quare an' quick.

MICHAEL. Ye won't disappoint us, Mr. Rainey ?

RAINEY. A'll go all right. We'll see who has the most influence, me or Hart ?

MICHAEL. Aw, there's not much doubt about that.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, now ye've done yer talkin' ye'll have til have somethin' til ate. Come on an' help me til lay the table, Michael.

MICHAEL. Sure an' I will gladly, Mrs. Rainey.

(*He gets up and helps her to bring the table forward.* MRS. RAINEY *puts a pair of slippers at her husband's feet.*

MRS. RAINEY. Here, let me take yer boots off.

RAINEY. Aw, A'll do that meself.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, g'long wi' ye, ye ould footer. Ye'd be breakin' the laces or somethin'.

(*She unlaces his boots, whilst* MICHAEL *spreads the table-cloth.*

ACT III

It is the late afternoon of the next day. MRS. RAINEY *is sitting in the armchair in front of the fire, darning socks. She is singing softly to herself. The street-door opens and her husband enters.*

MRS. RAINEY. There ye are, then.

RAINEY. Ay! Where's the lads?

MRS. RAINEY. A don't know. They're out somewhere. Wur ye spakin' again the day?

RAINEY. A wus spakin' twice the day.

MRS. RAINEY. Man, dear, ye're gettin' the quare orator. Sure, ye'll be in Parliament wan o' these days if ye go on at that rate.

RAINEY (*not displeased*). Aw, now, houl' yer wheesht.

MRS. RAINEY (*holding up the socks to view*). But sure ye'll jus' wear out the socks the same whativir ye are. A nivir saw such an a man for holes in his socks as you in me born days. A'm nivir done mendin'.

RAINEY. Aw, well, sure it's pastime fur ye. Whin ye've nathin' else til do, ye can sit down an' take yer aise an' darn a few socks. It's the quare aisy time weemen has be men.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, indeed, ye know little about it. Will ye be ready fur yer tay yit?

RAINEY. A will in a wee while. Is the washin' come home yit? A must have a clane "dickey" fur the Lodge the night.

MRS. RAINEY. An' what are ye goin' t' do at the Lodge the night.

RAINEY. Sure, didden ye know A wus goin' til spake til the Or'ngemen so's til counteract the influence o' that man thrum Dublin.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, ay, A furgot. Three spaches in wan day . . . aw, dear, dear, what a dale o' argyin' men have til have. Yer washin's on the bed.

RAINEY. A'll jus' go an' put meself tidy, an' mebbe be the time A come down ye'll have the tay ready ?

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, ye're in no hurry fur yer tay. Ye can wait awhile til the others come in. A'm expectin' Mickie an' Nora in wi' Hughie an' Tom til tay.

RAINEY. Thon girl's here brave an' often.

MRS. RAINEY. An' what wudden she be here fur ? She might as well be here as annywhere else.

RAINEY. Well, mebbe it's all right, but, man-a-dear, if A thought anythin' wus comin' out o' it . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Och, man, boys is alwis runnin' after girls. If a boy wus t' be married til iv'ry girl he courted, sure, he'd be a Mormon.

RAINEY. Ay ! (*He stands in silence for a moment or two and then crosses to his wife's side.*) It's a quare solemn thing, marriage.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, it's not as solemn as people make out. Sure, we're not solemn ?

RAINEY. It's solemn all the same. It's the pickin' an' the choosin' . . . ye have t' be careful. A man an' a wumman ought t' be very much the same afore they marry. Ye have t' live wi' one another, an' if there's a big differs atween ye, it's quare an' bad.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, some people are that different thrum each other they nivir find it out.

RAINEY. Aw, but there's some things, like religion . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Now, now, religion can take care o' itself. Gw'on an' put on yer dickey fur dear sake, or ye'll be makin' yer three spaches t' me afore A know where A am.

RAINEY (*patting her on the head, and laughing*). Hey, ye're the funny oul' wumman. (*He goes up the stairs.*)

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, an' ye're the funny oul' man.

RAINEY (*speaking over the bannisters*). We're the funny oul' couple thegither.

MRS. RAINEY. G'long wi' ye.

RAINEY. We've had the brave times thegither, haven't we ?

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, it's not bin so bad.

RAINEY. An' we'll have the quare good times yit. There's fine work t' be done in the wurl', smoothin' things out. Aw, it's gran', it's gran', an' it's a privilege fur me til be able t' do it.

MRS. RAINEY. Indeed, that's the truth ye're sayin', on'y there's manny a man spoils his work wi' temper.

RAINEY. A'm not a bad-tempered man. A'm the most considerate man ye cud think o'. Luk at the way A let them Cathliks come intil the house, an' me own son walkin' up the road wi' one o' them. Ye wudden call that bigited, wud ye ?

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, that's not much. Sometimes ye have til choose atween yer work an' yer life. It wud be the quare bad thing til choose yer life.

RAINEY. Ay ! (*He comes down the stairs again and stands before the fire.*)

MRS. RAINEY. D'ye think ye'd let anythin' stan' atween ye an' the work ye're goin' t' do.

RAINEY. It's a gran' work, t' make peace. Aw, when ye come t' think o' it, it's awful the way the wurl's bin goin' on up til now. Men fightin' wi' wan another, an' prosperin' out o' wan another's misfortune. War all the time.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, an' the wurl' not a ha'penny the better fur it.

RAINEY. Ye're right. Ye're right. Ye are, indeed. An' ye've on'y got til put out yer han's til wan another, an' grip them, an' it's all over.

MRS. RAINEY. An' yer enemy issen yer enemy a-tall. Aw, that's quare, t' be seein' enemies where there is no enemies.

RAINEY. Ay !

MRS. RAINEY. A wondher what ye'd do if ye wur in a fix atween yer religion an' yer desire t' make peace. Somethin' wud have t' give way.

RAINEY. Aw, A'd do the right thing, A can tell ye. (*He*

goes up the stairs.) Ye can trust me. A'm not a chile. A've got a bit o' wit in me head, A can tell ye. A'm not the one til be misled.

(*The door opens hurriedly and* TOM *enters in excitement.*

TOM. Hi, ma, come on quick. Ye're wanted.

MRS. RAINEY. Whativir's the matter wi' ye ?

RAINEY (*from the stairs*). Can't ye control yerself, an' not be runnin' about like a wil' thing.

TOM. It's Mickie ! He's got his head cut open.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, Lord bliss us.

RAINEY. What's that ye say ?

TOM. A lot o' wee lads wus singin' a party tune, an' cursin' the Pope, an' he toul' them they shudden do the like o' that, an' a drunk man wus goin' by, an' hit him on the head wi' a belt. He's in Martin's shop. Come on quick, an' luk after him. Sure, he'll bleed til death.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, don't put yerself out s' much. Sure, people don't bleed til death as aisy as that. Get me me shawl fur dear sake.

RAINEY. That's bigotry fur ye. A man has t' be drunk afore he'd do the like o' that.

TOM. Be the luk o' the people in this town, an' the way they go on, ye'd think they wur alwis drunk. Here's yer shawl, ma. Come on, quick.

MRS. RAINEY. Did ye go fur the doctor ?

TOM. Naw.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, why didden ye go fur him afore ye come fur me ? Run now, will ye, an' A'll go on til Martin's.

(*Exit* TOM.

RAINEY. That's right. Poor lad, bring him back here. Will A come wi' ye ?

MRS. RAINEY. Now, what wud ye do that fur ? Ye'd be makin' spaches til the doctor, an' gettin' in the way. Gw'on an' put on yer dickey, an' try an' be dacent-lukkin' whin A come back.

RAINEY. That drunk man ought t' be put in jail.

MRS. RAINEY. There's many does worse nor him whin they're not drunk, an' they're put in Parliament. A wun't be long. (*She goes out quickly.*

(RAINEY *stands on the stairs for a while in thought, and then goes up to the bedroom, shutting the door noisily behind him. There is quiet in the kitchen for a little while; then the door opens and* HUGH *and* NORA *enter.*

HUGH. Sure, come on in.

NORA. Och, no, A wun't come in now.

HUGH. Och, come on. There's no wan in. (*He goes to the scullery and shouts into the yard.*) Are ye in, ma? (*As there is no response, he returns to the kitchen.*) Sure, ye might as well stay now ye're here. A expect me ma's just away out til the shop.

NORA. Is yer da in?

HUGH. Aw, he's out somewhere, A s'pose. He's quarely taken on wi' the notion o' spakin'. Sure, he'll be goin' on makin' spaches fur ivir if wur not careful, jus' like wan o' them men ye see in the market sellin' oul' clo'es, or a member o' Parliament on the Twelfth o' July, whin he's half drunk an' near out o' his min' wi' the noise o' the drums.

NORA. Aw, now, ye shudden be makin' fun o' yer da.

HUGH. A'm not makin' no fun o' him. A'm beginnin' t' respect him.

NORA. Och, but sure ye alwis did that ivir since ye wur a wee lad that height. (*She lets her hand fall to the level of her knee.*)

HUGH. Naw, A wus afeard o' him; but A'm beginnin' t' respect him. It's a quare thing that whin a man begins t' respect his da. Sure, sit down.

NORA (*sitting down on the sofa*). Hughie. (*She takes him by the hand and he sits down beside her.*) D'ye think yer da'll be very angry about you an' me?

HUGH. A suppose he'll storm an' rave awhile, but sure if he sees we're determined he'll give way an' make the best o' it. It's no good shoutin' at what ye can't help.

NORA. Ye won't let him separate us, Hughie?

HUGH. Separate us. Naw, A wun't let him do that. Man, dear, it wud take a quare man til separate us now.

NORA. An' ye wun't let them tempt ye? . . .

HUGH. What wud they tempt me wi', fur dear sake?

NORA. Mebbe they'll be tellin' ye t' lave me fur the sake o' Irelan'. Aw, A know, A know they'll do it. Mickie 'll try. Sure, he dussen care what happens s'long as his plans fur Irelan' is all right. He'd sacrifice his own da an' ma fur that.

HUGH. It's fine t' have a spirit like that. Not til let anythin' come atween ye an' the thing ye want.

NORA. Wud ye give me up, Hughie, fur Irelan'?

HUGH. Naw, A wudden.

(*She clutches him tightly to her.*

NORA. Aw, my man, A cudden let ye go. A'd houl' on til ye if the wurl' wus til fall in anondher wur feet if A didden let go. (*She kisses him eagerly.*) A don't care fur nathin' but you . . .

HUGH. A love ye, too, Nora.

NORA. A'm ashamed til be talkin' like this, but A can't help it. A'd let Irelan' go til hell fur ye, Hugh.

HUGH. Aw, don't be sayin' that.

NORA. It's true, it's true! When A think mebbe they'll take ye thrum me A go near mad wi' fear.

HUGH. They'll nivir do that. (*He puts his arms tightly around her.*) It's a quare fine thing t' be in love wi' you, Nora. Sometimes whin A'm thinkin' about it A can't ondherstan' it. A'm jus' like a man wi' somethin' inside him that wants t' come out, an' can't fin' the way. Ye know what A mane, don't ye? A want til tell ye, but A don't know how, an' A jus' stan' still wi' me tongue clackin' in me mouth like a dumb man's.

(*The door of the bedroom opens and* RAINEY *appears at the top of the stairs. He is dressed in his Sunday clothes. At the sound of the voices he stops and listens.*

A want til tell iv'rybuddy A'm in love wi' ye, an' goin'

t' marry ye. A feel prouder nor the King o' Englan' or the Lord Mayor o' Bilfast. (*He jumps up excitedly and drags her up beside him.*

(RAINEY *descends a few steps, quietly, listening.* There'll not be a happier man in Irelan' nor me when A'm married t' ye, da or no da. (*He kisses her again and holds her closely to him.*

RAINEY. What's that ye say ?

(*They start apart from one another, and look up at the old man, who regards them silently, and then, without speaking, descends into the kitchen.*

Did A hear ye sayin' ye wur goin' til marry this wumman ?

HUGH. Ye did !

RAINEY (*to* NORA). Ye're goin' til take him, A s'pose ?

NORA. A am.

RAINEY. Ye're a Cathlik, aren't ye ?

NORA. Yes, A am.

RAINEY. Issen it agin yer religion t' marry a Prodesan ?

NORA. It can be done, but A don't care.

RAINEY. Will ye turn Prodesan if ye marry him ?

NORA. Naw, A wun't.

HUGH. An' A'll not ask her nayther. What call wud she have til do the like o' that when she belaves in it ?

RAINEY. If she belaves in it, what does she want wi' a man that dussen, will ye tell me that ?

HUGH. It's acause A care fur her, an' she cares fur me . . .

RAINEY. What's carin' til yer sowl, man. If ye damn yerself in the next wurl' fur the pleasure o' a wumman in this, what good 'll that do ye ? Man, man, think what ye're doin'.

HUGH. A've made up me min', da.

RAINEY. Ye're goin' til marry her ?

HUGH. Aye, A am.

RAINEY. Aw, what a fool A've bin. (*To* NORA.) Ye trapped me nicely. A wus t' be the tool in yer han's, an' do yer work fur ye, an' whin A wussen lukkin' ye wur t' marry me son. You an' that man O'Hara . . . aw, what

a fool A've bin. They wur right whin they said the strack wus a Papish plot (*furiously*). Aw, wumman, git oura me house, will ye, afore A strack ye down ?

HUGH. My God, da, if ye touch her, A'll brain ye.

RAINEY (*calming himself with a great effort*). Ay, ye've learned yer lesson well. Ye've turned agin yer own father. That's her, A s'pose ?

NORA. Indeed, indeed, A nivir . . .

RAINEY. Don't spake til me, wumman.

HUGH. Don't talk til her like that. She's not the dirt aneath yer feet.

RAINEY (*to* NORA, *quietly*). Ye know ye'd nivir be happy thegither. Ye ought t' marry a man o' yer own faith. It's not right t' be marryin' out o' yer religion.

NORA. A want him . . .

HUGH. An' A want her too. An' A'll not give her up.

RAINEY. What 'ud be the good o' ye marryin'. Yer frien's 'll forsake ye. (*To* NORA.) All yer own people 'll cast ye off acause ye married a Prodesan, an' A'll nivir own him fur a son if he marries a Cathlik.

HUGH. A can't help that.

RAINEY (*to* NORA). Ye wudden ruin him, wud ye ? Ye'd be turnin' him agin his people.

NORA. A'd be havin' him meself.

RAINEY. Are ye thinkin' on'y o' yerself ? Have ye no thought fur no wan else ? There's no love where there's selfishness.

HUGH. What are you thinkin' of ? On'y an ould superstition. Ye've somethin' in yer min' about Cathliks an' Prodesans, an' ye're thinkin' o' that all the time. Ye're not thinkin' o' her an' me, an' ye don't care about us bein' happy. Ye're alwis batin' an Or'nge drum.

RAINEY. That's the quare disrespectful way t' spake t' yer father. A brought ye intil the wurl' an' rared ye well, an' this is the thanks A git.

HUGH. A didden ask ye t' bring me intil the wurl ?

RAINEY. A've bin a good father t' ye.

HUGH. D'ye want credit fur that ? Sure, ye had t' be.

Ye did what ye had t' do an' ye expect me t' have no will o' me own in return fur it. Ye've bullied me since A wus a chile.

RAINEY. A've not bullied ye. A've bin starn wi' ye fur yer own good.

HUGH. Luk at the way ye talk t' Tom. He daren't open his mouth fur ye, but what ye call him out o' his name, an' make him luk like a fool afore strangers. D'ye want t' know why we've stud it so long? It's not fur your sake, but acause o' me ma. We'd agone long ago if it hadden bin fur her. Yer starnness an' yer good trainin' wus on'y bullyin', that's all it wus.

RAINEY. There's no good talkin' t' ye, ye've bin led astray. A'll ask this wumman if she's satisfied wi' what she's done. (*To* NORA.) Ye've turned him again his father, an' made him say things til me that he'll rue til his dyin' day. A wondher if ye're satisfied?

NORA. Aw, ye're a hard man, Mr. Rainey. Ye know A've nivir said a word again ye. A've alwis stud up fur ye.

RAINEY. Will ye give him up?

NORA. Ye want me t' do somethin' A can't do. He's the on'y man A ivir thought of. A can't give him up. A need him.

RAINEY. It's a terrible thing fur a wumman til come atween a man an' his parents.

HUGH. Sure, they're doin' it iv'ry day.

NORA (*to* MR. RAINEY.) A'll be a good wife til him. A will, indeed. Ye'll nivir regret lettin' him marry me.

RAINEY. A'm not lettin' him. He's doin' it wi'out me will.

NORA. Aw, but ye will let him, wun't ye?

RAINEY. If ye'll turn Prodesan A will.

NORA. Naw, A wun't do that. A can't give up me religion.

RAINEY. Can't ye give him up, then?

NORA. A can't give him up ayther.

RAINEY. Then A've no more t' say. He'll lave this

house the night onless he gives ye up. A can't have him here.

NORA. Aw, don't say that, Mr. Rainey.

RAINEY. A don't want no more t' say t' ye. A've done wi' ye. Ye've put anger in me son again me.

HUGH. A don't care. It'll be no grief til me til lave the house. A'm a man, an' not a chile, an' A'll choose me wife where A like, an' not where you like. A'm not afeard.

RAINEY Them that dishonours their father an' their mother 'll rue it in the Last Day.

HUGH. A'm not afeard. A'll git lodgin's the night. A'll not trouble ye wi' me comp'ny anny longer. (NORA *weeps helplessly*.) Don't be cryin', dear. Sure, this is on'y a bit o' bother that 'll not last fur ivir. We knew it 'ud have t' come some time. It's no good complainin' acause it's come sooner nor we thought. We'll be married the quicker.

(*The door opens and* MRS. RAINEY, *followed by* TOM *and* MICHAEL, *enters*.

MRS. RAINEY (*to* MICHAEL). Now, come on in an' rest yerself. (*To her husband*.) Fur dear sake, what's the matter wi' ye. Ye'd think ye'd seen a ghost ye're that white.

RAINEY (*pointing to* MICHAEL). Sen' that Fenian out o' my house.

MRS. RAINEY. Eh!

RAINEY (*with great anger*). A say, sen' that Fenian out o' my house, A tell ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, ye're not right the day. Ye're beside yerself wi' all that spache-makin'. Take no notis o' him, Mickie, but come on in an' lie down on the sofa, fur sure indeed it's a long rest ye're needin' more nor annythin' else.

RAINEY. D'ye hear me, wumman? A'll have no Fenians here.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye must be crazed, man. What's the matter wi' ye? Tom, git yer father a drink o' watter.

RAINEY. Sit down an' listen t' me, an' mebbe ye'll ondherstan' what A mane. Hugh's goin' til marry that girl.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, that's a dreadful thing, issen it?

RAINEY. Ay, it is. She's a Cathlik.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, is that all? A thought be the way ye wur talkin' she wus a murderer an' a brute baste rowled intil wan.

RAINEY. It's quaren funny, issen it?

MRS. RAINEY. A wondher if ye'll ivir larn anny sense? What differs does it make what religion she is, s'long as she's a good wife til him. D'ye think if A cudden cook yer dinner fur ye an' keep the house clane an' bring yer childher up, it 'ud be anny consolation t' ye that A wus a Prodesan. A can see ye goin' about the house, an' it all dirty, tellin' yerself it dussen matter about the muck acause yer wife's a good Or'ngewumman. Och, man, don't talk blether.

RAINEY. Ye wud think t' hear ye, the on'y thing in the wurl' that matters is atin'.

MRS. RAINEY. It's all that matters wi' most men. Sit down, now, an' try an' be sensible. Shut the door, Tom, an' keep the draught off Michael. Sit down all o' ye. Come here, Mickie, an' sit be the fire. (*To* RAINEY.) Luk at his head. That's what you quare intelligent men do til show how clivir ye are. Aw, there's times when a wumman's sick o' men an' their folly. Can't ye go through the wurl' without hammerin' wan another like bastes o' the fiel'.

RAINEY. Ye're on his side.

MRS. RAINEY. A'm on no side. A wumman has no right t' be choosin' sides. There's right wi' iv'ry man, an' there's wrong, too. A'm fur him, an' A'm fur you, too. Ye're both right, an' ye're both wrong, but sure ye're jus' the same t' me whether ye are or not. How are ye now, Mickie?

MICHAEL. A'm all right, thank ye. Mebbe, A'd better be goin?

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'll stay where ye are. Now, what's the bother wi' ye all?

RAINEY. A come down the stairs an' A saw him kissin' her.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'd no business t' be watchin'.

RAINEY. A wussen watchin'. A didden know they wur there. A heerd him tellin' her he wud marry her after the strack wus over.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, that's sensible enough. Ye wudden have him marry her while it's on, wud ye?

RAINEY. A don't want him til marry her a-tall.

HUGH. It's not what you want . . .

RAINEY. Don't spake t' me again. Ye're no son o' mine.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, ye can't cut off yer relations like that. He's yer son whether ye like it or not.

RAINEY. A wun't own him.

HUGH. Nobuddy wants you to.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, now, Hughie, don't be talkin' t him like that. Sure, he's yer father.

HUGH. That's no rayson why he should bully me.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, but it's an excuse. Mebbe, ye'll be like it yerself wan day?

TOM. Lord save us, there's alwis a row goin' on in this house.

RAINEY. Hould yer tongue, will ye? Don't let a word out o' yer head. A've enough trouble on me min' wi'out you addin' til it.

MRS. RAINEY. Does it ivir occur til ye, John, that Tom's not a wee lad anny more? He's a brave big fella, now.

RAINEY. He has no wit.

TOM. Ay, A have. A lot more'n ye think, on'y ye nivir let me git a word out o' me, but ye near snap the head o' me. A'm gettin' quaren tired o' it, A tell ye.

RAINEY. Ay, you'll be lavin' me, too. That's the way. Bring up yer childher well, an' spare them nathin', an' they'll turn on ye in yer ould age.

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe, if ye wur a wee bit more o' a frien' til them, an' a wee bit less o' a father, they wudden turn on ye so readily. Ye're alwis wantin' til make them do things acause ye're their father, instid o' waitin' fur them til do it o' their own free will.

HUGH. Ye may as well know all, ma. A've bin turned out. A'm goin' t' luk fur lodgin's.

MRS. RAINEY. Who's turned ye out?

HUGH. Me da.

MRS. RAINEY. What right had he t' turn ye out?

RAINEY. A'm master o' this house, amn't A?

MRS. RAINEY. No, ye're not. There's no master here. It's my house, as much as yours. Ye didden ask my lave til turn him out, an' ye wun't git it. D'ye hear? If ye turn him out, ye turn me out, too.

TOM. Ay, an' me.

RAINEY. Ay, ye're all agin me, but A'll do me duty. A'm agin a man marryin' out o' his religion, an' A'll stick til that no matter what happens. (*To* NORA, *who is crying.*) Ay, ye may well cry. Ye've brought great trouble on this house. A might ha' known that whin A mixed meself up wi' Cathliks. There's no good can come o' that. Ye wur all quaren clivir, wurn't ye? Ye wudden say nathin' about this til after the strack. Ye'd use me fur yer purposes, an' be stabbin' me in the back all the time.

MICHAEL. There nivir wus no thought o' that in my min'. If ye think this is plasin' til me, Mr. Rainey, ye're quaren mistaken. A saw a chance o' unitin' the people o' Irelan' again, an' A've worked fur it an' suffered fur it. Man, man, what's your grief til mine? You're thinkin' o' a son, an' A'm thinkin' o' a nation. Man, ye wun't let this stan' in the way. Think o' the gran' wurk ye wur goin' til do.

RAINEY. A've done wi' it.

MICHAEL. Naw, naw. Ye can't go back now. Sure, there's many waitin' fur a sign thrum you. We've set wur hopes on ye. Ye're not goin' til destroy them, are ye?

RAINEY. A've done wi' it, A've done wi' it.

MRS. RAINEY. Man, ye don't know what ye're sayin'. Ye wudden stap now, wud ye, whin ye've near done the work ?

RAINEY. A tell ye A've done wi' it.

MICHAEL. Mr. Rainey, think fur a minit. Ye know this is jus' the critical time. A strong man can do what he likes wi' the people now. They're in the half-an'-half state. Ye can make them wurk thegither or ye can make them fight thegither. You're the man can do that. Hart hassen got the influence you have. Anythin' he does, you can undo aisily. He's goin' about now talkin' o' Popery an' priest-rule, an' urgin' the Prodesans til break the strack acause it's directed be Cathliks. S'long as you stick up fur us, there's an answer til that, but if ye desert us, there's none, an' all the good we've done will be destroyed.

RAINEY. A belave that man Hart's right.

MICHAEL. What !

RAINEY. A belave he's right. It is a Papish plot, the strack. How can A belave anythin' else whin A see it goin' on in me own house. Me son taken thrum me be a Papish wumman !

MICHAEL. Aw, man, ye don't mane that ?

RAINEY. A do.

MICHAEL. Ye'll not ondo iv'rything fur the sake o' that ?

RAINEY. A'll do no more. A've done wi' it all. A'm not goin' til the Or'nge Hall the night.

MICHAEL. Aw, but ye've promised.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye can't go back on yer word.

RAINEY. A can, an' A will.

HUGH. It's a mane thing t' do. Ye think ye'll stap Nora an' me thrum marryin' acause o' the strack, but ye wun't

NORA. Aw, A nivir thought o' that.

MICHAEL. Will ye go if they give wan anither up ?

RAINEY. A'm not sure. A har'ly know where A am yit.

MICHAEL. Man, there's no time t' be lost. Will ye

go til the Or'nge Hall the night, an' spake agin Hart if they agree not til marry wan another ?

RAINEY. How'll A know they'll kape their word ?

MICHAEL. Ye'll have til trust them.

RAINEY. An' if they betray me

MICHAEL. Ye'll have til lave them til God. Sure, treachery be anny wan else is no rayson fur treachery be you.

HUGH. Ye needn' bother yerself, we'll not agree til that.

MICHAEL. It's not you A'm goin' til ask. Nora, ye know what this means, don't ye ? Ye know what we're workin' fur ?

NORA. Ay.

MICHAEL. It's a bigger thing nor you are, issen it ? Ye know it is, for all ye won't answer. It's Irelan' agin you. Irelan's a bigger thing nor you an' Hugh an' me an' all o' us rowled thegither.

NORA. A don't belave it. A'm in the wurl' t' be happy, an' A'll be happy wi' him.

MICHAEL. What'll yer happiness be til ye, if it manes the destruction o' a nation ?

NORA. A don't care.

RAINEY. Have ye no thought fur others ?

NORA. No, A haven't. On'y fur him an' me.

HUGH. Ye've no thought yerself fur anythin' but yer blin' superstitions an' yer bigotry. Ye're a man til talk about sacrifice, whin ye'd destroy Irelan' fur yer damned bigotry.

MICHAEL. Don't be talkin' like that. Sure, it's his faith. He can't go back on his faith.

HUGH. A can't go back on Nora.

MICHAEL. Will ye give him up, Nora ? It's no good talkin' t' him. He's demented wi' love.

NORA. No, A wun't give him up. A need him, A need him.

MICHAEL. What's your need til the wurl's need ?

MRS. RAINEY. Man, Michael, when yer as oul' as A am,

ye'll know that yer own need is the wurl's need. It's love that Nora an' Hugh needs, an' it's love the wurl' needs. Ye're wrong til be suggestin' partin' til them. Can't ye see, they're doin' the very thing ye want Irelan' t' do. It's Cathlik an' Prodesan joinin' hands thegither. It's quare ye shud be wantin' til separate them.

MICHAEL. It's acause A want a bigger joinin' o' han's. It's not enough fur a man an' a wumman til join han's. A want til see the whole wurl' at peace.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'll on'y git that be men an' weemen bein' at peace. Him an' her, Mickie, are bigger than the wurl', if ye on'y knew it. That man o' mine can't see fardher nor churches an' Or'nge Lodges, an' all the time there's men an' wimmen stan'in' about, waitin' fur somethin' til bring them thegither.

MICHAEL. Aw, but selfishness is the curse o' the wurl'. An' it's the curse o' Irelan' more nor anny other country. They wur alwis thinkin' o' theirselves, the men an' weemen that might ha' saved Irelan'. Whinivir a man's come near deliverin' Irelan', a wumman's stepped in an' destroyed him. It's alwis bin the way since the beginnin'. Alwis, alwis, alwis! There'll be no salvation fur Irelan' til a man is born that dussen care a God's curse fur weemen. They're hangin' about the neck o' the lan', draggin' her down.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye're blamin' us fur the follies o' men. Is Nora to blame acause my man's a fool?

RAINEY. A'm no fool. A must stick til the right. It's onnacherl fur a man an' a wumman til live in the same house an' worship in a differ'nt church.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, if they can live in the same lan' they can live in the same house. It's ony igner'nce an' wickedness an' men wi' foul tongues that makes it hard. John, ye'll be a good man, an' go til the Or'nge Hall the night, an' do yer best t' keep the peace.

RAINEY. A can't go.

HUGH. A'll go meself. A won't belave that the men o' Irelan' will let bigotry destroy them fur ivir.

MICHAEL. Ye can't go. Ye're not an Or'ngeman.

HUGH. A'll git in somehow. If A've spoiled the work, A can mend it again

MICHAEL. If ye had on'y waited awhile. In a week or two, it 'ud ha' bin all over, an' we'd ha' won. Aw, Mr. Rainey, can't ye think o' the danger o' losin' iv'rythin' be yer action. Ye run the risk o' perpetuatin' bigotry an' losin' all we've struck fur. Man, ye can't do the like o' that.

RAINEY. A'll do what ye want if he'll give her up. A wun't go anear the Or'nge Hall if he dussen.

HUGH. An' A wun't give her up, A tell ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, the wurl' is bein' destroyed be headstrong men. (*To* RAINEY.) Will ye go til the Lodge the night, an' lave this over fur awhile? (*To* HUGH.) Ye'll promise not til marry her til after yer da's had time til think it over?

HUGH. Ay, A'll do that.

RAINEY. There's nathin' til be thought over. He's determined til marry her, an' she's determined not til change her religion. There's nathin' more til be said. Ye'll git me t' go t' the Lodge the night ondher pretence that mebbe they'll change their min's, an' ye know as well as yer livin', they won't. (*Pointing to* NORA.) Luk at that wumman's face. She manes til marry him.

MICHAEL. Wud ye sacrifice all the rest o' us fur them? That's what ye're doin', min' ye. There's a whole townfull o' us, an' ye'll let us go t' wreck an' ruin fur wan man an' a wumman.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, indeed, ye're jus' as bad as they are.

RAINEY. Ay, ye'll all make me out in the wrong. Ye give me no credit a-tall. A'm on'y an obstinit oul' man t' ye. Ye nivir think A'm in earnest about me religion.

TOM. A nivir knew bein' in earnest wus anny excuse fur makin' a fool o' yerself.

RAINEY. Hould yer tongue.

TOM. Naw, A wun't. A've bin put upon long enough. Ye're an oul' fool, that's what ye are; a damned oul' fool.

RAINEY. Ye young scoundrel . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Tom, dear, don't ye think ye might go out fur a wee walk ?

TOM. Naw, A don't want a wee walk. A'm alwis sent out fur a walk whin there's a bit o' bother. A'm a man the same as he is.

MICHAEL. Aw, Tom, don't make it anny worse nor it is.

MRS. RAINEY. Now, jus' sit down, the whole o' ye. Dear-a-dear, it's the quare hard work fur a wumman, keepin' men at peace. If there wussen the like o' us in the wurl' ye'd be kickin' wan another iv'ry five minits. Now, what are ye goin' t' do about it all ? Are ye goin' t' the Lodge, John ?

RAINEY. Naw, A'm not.

MRS. RAINEY. Is that yer last answer ?

RAINEY. Ay, it is.

MRS. RAINEY. It's a quare pity o' ye. Ye'll be sorry fur this, A tell ye.

RAINEY. A can't help that.

MRS. RAINEY. Well, Mickie, an' what are you goin' t' do ?

MICHAEL. A don't know. A'll have til think o' somethin'. A'm all throughover. What wi' the slap on the head an' this suddent trouble, A don't know what A'm doin'. A'm near broke wi' grief. A'm the one feels it most. A've dreamt o' this since A wus born, an' now it's near done, this comes an' destroys it. My God, Mrs. Rainey, what a wurl'.

MRS. RAINEY (*patting him on the back*). Aw, keep yer heart up, Mickie. Mebbe, it'll be all right. A wish there wus Or'ngeweemen. A'd go meself in his place.

HUGH (*jumping up*). A'm not an Or'ngeman, but A'll go. Hart issen nayther, an' if they'll let him in, they'll let me. A'll spake til them, an' put a stop til Hart's nonsense. A'm the one'll do it. A'll not let it be said the peace o' Irelan' wus destroyed be the Raineys.

RAINEY. Ay, ye'll do a quare lot. Ye can't spake ?

HUGH. A can spake as good as you.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, can't ye control yer tongues. Ye do too much spakin' atween ye. Ye're consated about yer spakin'.

HUGH. A've nivir spoke afore, but A'll spake the night. A will, A declare til God. A'll put a stap til bigotry.

RAINEY. Will ye tell them why A've refused til have anythin' more til do wi' it?

MRS. RAINEY. What wud he be doin' that fur?

RAINEY. Naw, iv coorse not. Ye'll desave them as ye desaved me. D'ye think anny good 'll come out o' that?

HUGH. It's noan o' their business who A marry.

NORA. A can't ondherstan' why a man an' a wumman can't git married wi'out iv'ry wan goin' out o' their wits?

MRS. RAINEY. Och, they alwis do, dear. Sure, it's the way the wurl's made. Ye have t' put up wi' it.

TOM. It's a funny soart o' wurl' then.

HUGH. A don't belave the Or'ngemen are such fools as ye make out. They're brave sensible men, a lot o' them, if they wur on'y let alone be them that's supposed t' be their betters.

RAINEY. Will ye tell them why?

HUGH. It's not necessary. It's nathin' t' do wi' it.

RAINEY. Then A'll go meself an' tell them. We'll see who can spake the best then.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, ye cudden go out on a night like this. Sure, ye're gettin' ould.

RAINEY. Lave me alone, will ye. Ye're all conspirin' agin me, but A'll bate ye yit. Gimme me coat, an' let me git out o' this.

MICHAEL. Ye'll have blood on yer han's, Mr. Rainey, if ye do that.

RAINEY. A don't care, A tell ye. A'll put a stap t' this.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, give him his coat, an' let him go, the headstrong oul' man.

HUGH. A'll be left whin he comes back.

TOM. Ay, an' so will I.

RAINEY (*to* MRS. RAINEY). A suppose you'll be gone too?

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, A think A'll be here. God help ye, ye'll need someone t' luk after ye.

RAINEY. Nathin' 'll stap me. A've made up me min'. Good-night t' ye. (*To* NORA.) Mebbe ye're satisfied, now, me fine girl?

MRS. RAINEY. Lave her alone. Aren't ye content wi' the bad work ye've done wi'out proddin' her wi' a knife? G'long wi' ye, an' do yer dirty work, an' don't stan' there hurtin' a girl that nivir done you no harm.

RAINEY. She tuk me son thrum me.

MRS. RAINEY. G'long wi' ye, an' make yer spache.

(RAINEY *stands for a moment irresolute, then goes out of the house quickly.*

(MICHAEL *covers his face with his hands. There is a silence, except for the sobbing of* NORA.

TOM. A think A'll go out fur a walk.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, do, dear.

(*Exit* TOM.

MICHAEL. A'll go home.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'll not let this upset ye, Mickie? Ye'll jus' go on tryin', wun't ye?

MICHAEL. It's the sore work, Mrs. Rainey.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, but sure, it 'ud be far sorer not til do it.

HUGH. A'm quare an' sorry, Mickie.

MICHAEL. It's a pity, Hughie. It's a quare pity.

HUGH. We'll not let this bate us.

NORA. No, we wun't. It's us now, that'll have til do the work. We'll all do it. A'll go an' talk til the men in the street, an' mebbe they'll listen til me. A'd 'a' given the wurl' if this hadden happened.

MICHAEL. It's the quare hard job til stap bigotry wance it's started. It runs like lightnin' an' them that tries til stap it has weights hangin' on them til keep them back. A'm afeard it's no good.

MRS. RAINEY. It'll be no good, if ye're afeard. Ye must keep yer heart up, that's the way o' the wurl'.

NORA. Ay, that's true. Good-night t' ye, Mrs. Rainey.

MRS. RAINEY (*pulling the girl close to her and kissing her very tenderly*). Ye'll be a good wife til him, dear, wun't ye?

NORA. A will, indeed.

MRS. RAINEY. Good-night, dear. Good-night, Hughie. When ye want me, jus' run in.

HUGH. A'll come back whin A've got lodgin's fur me things.

MRS. RAINEY. A'll have them ready fur ye. Aw, dear, A wish ye wurn't goin'. (HUGH *puts his arms about her and hugs her tightly.*) God bless ye, dear.

MICHAEL. Whativir happens, Mrs. Rainey, A'm not sorry A knew ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, well now, that's somethin' til be livin' fur. Sure, the best o' us can't do no more nor that.

MICHAEL. Good-night t' ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Come in in the mornin' an' A'll dress yer head fur ye.

MICHAEL. Aw, ye're brave an' kind. A cudden trouble ye.

MRS. RAINEY. Sure, it's no trouble a-tall. Good-night, Michael. Good-night t' ye all.

HUGH. Good-night, ma.

(*Exeunt* HUGH, NORA, *and* MICHAEL.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, it's a troublesome wurl'.

(*She draws her chair up to the fire and resumes her darning.*

ACT IV

It is ten days later. The kitchen shows signs of unusual agitation on the part of the occupants. The window-shutters are closely barred, and the street door is well fastened. Outside is heard the noise of people shouting ; occasionally a stone strikes the shutters or the door. MRS. RAINEY *and* NORA *are sitting by the fire.* JOHN RAINEY *strides up and down the kitchen floor, without speaking. Now and then he stops and listens to the noise. A stone rattles on the window, and a loud voice is heard shouting, " Bring out the Fenians."*

MRS. RAINEY. Ye wud think they wur wil' savages thrum the heart o' Africa, the way they're goin' on.

NORA. Sure, they're jus' demented wi' rage, an' they don't know what they're doin'.

(*Another stone strikes against the shutters.*

A wondher how many stones they've clodded at the house the day ?

MRS. RAINEY. Are them two upstairs all right ?

NORA. A'll call up til them. (*She rises and passes in front of* RAINEY ; *he ignores her. She calls up the stairs.*) Hughie, are ye all right ?

HUGH (*calling from above*). Ay, we're all right.

NORA. Ye'd better not be showin' yerself fur fear they clod a stone at ye.

(*The noise of breaking glass is heard.* NORA *runs up the stairs, crying out.*

MRS. RAINEY (*going to the staircase*). Come on down. the whole o' ye.

HUGH. Sure, we're all right. It's on'y the winda they've broke. The peelers are comin' now.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, thank God. Mebbe they'll go away now? (*She returns to her seat.*

RAINEY. It's like the Day o' Judgment.

MRS. RAINEY. A'm quare an' sorry fur ye, John. It's not very pleasant til have the like o' this on yer min'.

RAINEY. A'm not ashamed o' anything A've done. A'd do it again. But it's tarrible all the same.

MRS. RAINEY. Yer conscience an' yer principles causes a great dale o' trouble til other people.

RAINEY. A don't repent, A tell ye. Ye think ye'll prove me in the wrong acause o' the riot, but A don't care if there wus fifty riots wan on the top o' the other, A'm right, an' A'd do it again.

MRS. RAINEY. It's quare t' think o' ye goin' down that night, an' stirrin' up strife. It wus a tarrible thing t' do, John. Ye made the quare lot o' bad blood that time. An' a lot o' it 'll be spilt afore this is over. (*A volley of stones rattles on the shutters.*) Fur dear sake, d'ye hear that. Ye'd think they had a grudge agin the windas, the way they're batterin' them.

(TOM *comes down the stairs, hurriedly.*

TOM. The peelers are goin' til charge them wi' their batons.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, God help us. There 'll be broken heads in a minit or two.

(*Wilder cries are heard outside.*

TOM. The end o' it 'll be we'll have t' flit out o' this town. No wan 'll ivir spake til us again. A met Geordie M'Cracken a day ago, an' he nivir as much as lukked at me. It wus the quare cut.

MRS. RAINEY. Mebbe he didden see ye!

TOM. Aw, he saw me all right. He passed me by as if he didden know me. Me an' him wus chums thegither. . . . It's brave an' hard on me that nivir done nathin' til be losin' me frien's, acause me da won't have a Cathlik in the family. (*To his father.*) Mebbe ye're sorry now fur what ye've done?

RAINEY. A'm not sorry fur nathin'.

TOM. Well, ye ought t' be then.

MRS. RAINEY. All right, Tom, ye needen go on talkin' about it. Sure, there's things ye feel inside ye aven when ye won't let on til anny one else. Ye nivir know what's in a man's heart.

TOM. A'll go til Glasgow after this is over, or mebbe til Englan'. They don't make a lot o' damned fools o' themselves about religion over there.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, but, mebbe they have their own way o' bein' foolish ! Ye nivir know.

(*The noise outside has grown wilder.*

TOM (*going up the stairs again*). There 'll be some 'll be sorry afore this day is done.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, ay, indeed there will.

(*Exit* TOM.

RAINEY. He's right, that lad ; we'll have t' lave the town when it's over.

MRS. RAINEY. It's hard t' be lavin' the place ye wur born an' bred in when ye're ould.

RAINEY. Ay.

MRS. RAINEY. But A suppose ye're right ?

RAINEY. A am.

MRS. RAINEY. Ay, ye alwis thought that. (*They do not speak to one another for a moment.*) Why don't ye make it up wi' Hughie an' Nora. Ye know they come here specially this mornin' til be frien's wi' ye. It issen their fault the riot broke out the day. Ye've not said a word til aythir o' them since they come in, though they're ready an' willin' til make it up.

RAINEY. They're not here be my will.

MRS. RAINEY. Naw, that's true. But, sure, it's no good houl'in' out agin what can't be helped. Ye might as well put a kin' face on ye as not. They'll be married in a wee while, an' A wudden like us to be bad frien's wi' them when they'll mebbe need us most. We're gettin' ould, John. It dussen become the ould t' be headstrong an' onforgivin'.

RAINEY. A haven't another word t' say about it. A've said all A've got t' say. A can say no more.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye can alwis put in another word if ye want t', an' make it all differ'nt.

RAINEY. A don't want t'.

MRS. RAINEY. God forgive ye fur a headstrong man. John.

RAINEY. That's atween Him an' me.

(HUGH *comes down the stairs.*

HUGH. It's sickenin' t' be watchin' them. The peelers is batin' them over the heads wi' their batons. A wish t' God it wus over.

MRS. RAINEY. Are they stappin', d'ye think?

HUGH. Naw, they're not near stappin'. The peelers aren't enough.

(NORA *comes down quickly.*

NORA. Aw, Hugh, there's a Cathlik crowd comin' down the street, an' the peelers is atween them. There'll be murdher in a minit.

(TOM *cries out from the room above, "Hi, Hughie, come up quick."*

HUGH. What is it?

TOM (*appearing at the head of the stairs*). There's a lot o' Cathliks come, an' Mickie's at the head o' them.

RAINEY. Aw, A tould ye, didden A?

TOM. He's tryin' t' git them t' go away, but they're not takin' no notis o' him. A saw wan o' them hittin' him wi' a stick, an' shovin' him out o' the way.

MRS. RAINEY. It's no place that fur a man that manes well.

(HUGH *runs up the stair quickly, followed by* NORA. MRS. RAINEY *waits a little while, and then goes after them.*

(RAINEY *is left alone in the kitchen. He sits down in front of the fire and stares steadily into it. The noise of the riot is now intense. After a little while,* TOM *comes to the head of the stairs and shouts to his father.*

TOM. The sodgers are comin'. The peelers can't houl' out agin the crowd.

(RAINEY *does not reply.* TOM *goes back again. Above the murmur of the voices outside, the voice of* MICHAEL *is heard.*

MICHAEL. Fur God's sake, boys, go home, or there'll be bloodshed.

(*There are loud shouts of "Fenian" and "To hell with the Pope." and the noise of stones being thrown.*

(MRS. RAINEY *and* NORA *come back to the kitchen.*

MRS. RAINEY. He'll be killed if he stan's there anny longer. A've a good min' t' open the dure an' let him in.

RAINEY. Ye'll not let no more Cathliks in here.

MRS. RAINEY. What harm wud that do ye?

RAINEY. There's enough o' them here.

NORA. Ye'd better not open the dure. The crowd 'ud git in, an' dear on'y knows what they'd do.

(*The noise of tramping soldiers is heard, and an agitated voice reads monotonously outside the window.*

NORA. What's that man doin'?

TOM (*from the stairs*). There's a magistrate outside readin' the Riot Act.

NORA. The Riot Act!

TOM. Ay, there'll be shootin' after that.

(*An officer's voice is heard giving commands.*

MRS. RAINEY. They'll on'y use blank kertridges t' frighten them. Mebbe they'll go home now?

(*The Magistrate is heard calling upon the crowd to disperse. There is a roar of voices in reply. The Magistrate's voice is heard in a lull, shouting, "The soldiers will shoot if you don't go home quietly." There is a rattle of stones on the street, and much shouting. Then the officer is heard giving orders, and the noise of rifles being fired follows.*

NORA. Aw, Holy Mother o' God, they're shootin'!

MRS. RAINEY. Dear, oh dear, oh dear!

HUGH (*from the top of the stairs*). It's all right, ma, they

just shot over their heads. There's no wan hurt. It's scared them a bit, an' some o' them is runnin' home.

MRS. RAINEY. Come on down, Hugh, and bring Tom wi' ye. It's mebbe not safe up there.

HUGH. Aw, it's safe enough.

(*The uproar continues.*

NORA (*who is slightly hysterical*). No, don't go back again, Hugh. A'm afeard til death.

HUGH (*coming down the stairs and putting his arm around her*). Sure, there's nathin' til be afeard o'. It'll be all over in a minit or two.

(*More stones are thrown.*

TOM (*from above*). They've knocked a soldier senseless wi' a brick.

NORA. Aw, A know it'll be death til some. Don't go away thrum me. Me heart's in me mouth wi' fear.

HUGH. There now, ye're all right.

NORA. A've not bin the same since the men bate ye at the Custom House Steps that day. . . . A lost me nerve when A saw them strikin' ye.

(RAINEY, *who still paces up and down the room, passes her, and she starts with terror.*

HUGH. What ails ye?

NORA. It's nathin'. It wus like a shadow . . . (*She sits down on the sofa, and pulls him down beside her*). A'll be all right in a minit. On'y don't go away thrum me. A want ye near me. Aw, Hughie, Hughie, it wus our fault. We shud 'a' done what yer da wanted us t' do. We'll nivir know no peace after this day's work, but misery til we die. A'd give the wurl' if on'y A cud ondo it all.

HUGH. Ye mussen take on like that. Sure, it can't be helped.

RAINEY. It cud 'a' bin helped.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye wur all s' headstrong.

NORA. A wish A cud put things back again. Is there nathin' we can do.

RAINEY. There's nathin' til be done. It's too late.

NORA. There'll be men killed, an' weemen weepin',

It wus our fault. It's us they shud be shootin' an' not them.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, dear, houl' yer tongue. Ye mussen say the like o' that. (*She puts her arms around* NORA.) Sure, don't be cryin' like that. It's not your fault the wurl's like it is.

NORA. A can't help thinkin' it's me's t' blame. Ye min' what Michael said about men bein' ruined be weemen . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, sure, men alwis puts the blame on us whativir happens.

NORA. If A cud stap it A wud do annythin' at all. Mebbe, if A wus til go out til them, an' tell them it was my fault, they'd go home ! . . .

HUGH. Och, Nora, dear, don't be talkin' wil'ly. Ye're not near yerself.

(*The uproar continues, and, after the word of command is given, the rifles are fired again.*

NORA. Aw, they're shootin' again. Don't let them, don't let them.

TOM (*from the top of the stairs*). It's all right. They've not hit annyone. They're on'y tryin' t' frighten them. It's blank kertridges they're usin'. A wish t' me goodness Mickie 'ud go on home. They're throwin' stones at him as well as the soldiers.

MRS. RAINEY. Try an' sign til him to go away.

TOM. A'll try, but sure he'll not see me, an' not heed me if he does. (*He goes back into the room.*

HUGH. A wush we cud get him in here.

MRS. RAINEY. Yer da says he'll not let him in.

HUGH. Da, ye'll not keep it up any longer, will ye ?

RAINEY. A don't know ye. Ye're a stranger in this house. You an' that wumman. (*He points to* NORA.)

HUGH. A day like this, da, is no time fur ill-feelin'.

RAINEY. There can be nathin' else on a day when men clod stones at my dure. D'ye hear that ? Clod stones at my dure. There nivir wus the like o' that done til me afore.

HUGH. Well, it can't be helped now.

RAINEY. Ye can't get out o' yer punishment that way. Yer reward's outside: men mad wi' rage, an' sodgers shootin' them down.

HUGH (*with rising anger*). An' whose fault is that? There wudda bin noan o' this if ye hadden bin so headstrong and bigoted.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, don't begin it all over again.

NORA. Yer da's right, Hugh. It's me's t' blame. Ye wud 'a' given me up if A'd 'a' let ye. All' nivir be happy again wi' this on me min'.

HUGH. Ye'll be all right, dear. Sure, we'll go away . . .

NORA. Ye can't go away thrum yerself. A wish A cud die.

MRS. RAINEY. Fur dear sake, Nora, pull yerself thegither. It's no way t' be goin' on, that. There's a dale t' be thought o', an' ye'll need all yer wits about it.

NORA. If A wus t' die mebbe it wud put things right?

HUGH. What's the good o' talkin' about dyin'? It'll be time enough t' do that when ye're ould.

RAINEY. If ye'd thought o' this afore ye done what ye did . . .

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, if we'd all thought o' this afore we done what we did. . . . Sure, stap talkin'. We're all makin' excuses fur wurselves, an' Mickie's outside tryin' t' make pace. Fur shame.

(*The uproar still continues and the voice of the officer is heard calling on the people to disperse. He threatens to use ball-cartridges if they do not do so.*

TOM (*coming to the top of the stairs*). Hugh, they're goin' t' shoot in earnest now. A heerd the officer sayin' they wud if the crowd wudden go home. Holy smoke! Somebuddy 'll be shot dead. Michael's runnin' about wi' blood streamin' down his face, tellin' the men t' go home, an' whinivir he says a word til wan o' them, they strack him in the face. Aw, it's awful the way they're goin' on, it is indeed.

NORA. Aw, Mickie 'll be shot. Ye'll not let them shoot

him, Hugh. He's done nathin'. It wus us, it wus us. They can shoot me if they like.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye'd better bring him in, Hugh. God save us all, will this day nivir end ?

RAINEY. It'll end when it's too late.

(HUGH *goes to the door and opens it. The uproar is horrible ; stones are thrown at him.*

HUGH. Hi, Michael, fur God's sake, come on in er that, or ye'll be killed. (*Loud cries of "Come out, ye Fenian ye," and "Down wi' Popery."*) Come on, Michael !

(*The officer speaks again, "For Heaven's sake, men, go home, or I'll order the soldiers to fire on you." A wild volley of stones is the reply of the crowd. The officers shouts to his men, "Present arms !"*

Aw, God save us, they're goin' t' shoot now. Michael, ye fool, come on in, or they'll kill ye.

NORA. What d'ye say ? They're not goin' t' shoot in earnest, are they ?

HUGH (*coming back to the kitchen, and covering his face with his hands*). Ay, they are.

NORA (*starts up*). They mussent shoot the people down.

(*The officer speaks again, "For the last time, men, will you go home ? I don't want to order the soldiers to shoot." Again, the crowd yells with rage, and throws stones at the soldiers.*

No, no, no, don't shoot them ! It wus my fault, A tell ye. Stap, stap. (*She runs into the street.*) Stap, stap, it wus me ! . . .

(*As she rushes into the street, the soldiers fire. She is seen to stagger a little, and look up suddenly, as one does in amazement. She cries, "Aw, Hughie, A'm shot !" and tries to catch the lintel of the door, but falls across the porch. The soldiers are heard charging the mob.*

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, what's happened, what's happened?

HUGH (*running to* NORA, *and catching her up in his*

arms). Nora, Nora, what's happened ye? My God, they've murdered her.

(MICHAEL *appears in the doorway.*

MICHAEL. What did ye let her out fur? Tom, Tom, come quick an' help us wi' her.

TOM. A knew somethin' like this wud happen. (*To his father.*) Mebbe ye're satisfied now.

MICHAEL. Run fur a doctor, will ye?

(TOM *goes out of the house quickly. A surly noise continues outside, now rising, now falling.*

(*A policeman appears in the doorway, and some of the neighbours.* HUGH *and* MICHAEL *lift* NORA *in their arms, and carry her to the sofa. The policeman enters with them, shutting the street door behind him.*

HUGH. Nora, ye're all right, aren't ye? Aw, spake t' me, wumman.

NORA (*feebly*). Don't be cryin', Hugh. It wus right t' shoot me. It wus my fault. A'm quaren glad.

RAINEY (*as if dreaming*). A wus right. A know A wus right.

MRS. RAINEY (*weeping a little, and patting him gently*). Aw, my poor man, my poor man.

MIXED MARRIAGE

This Play was first performed at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, on the 30th March, 1911. It was produced by Lennox Robinson, with the following cast :—

John Rainey	Arthur Sinclair
Mrs. Rainey	Maire O'Neill
Tom Rainey	U. Wright
Hugh Rainey	J. M. Kerrigan
Nora Murray	Maire Nic Shiubhlaigh
Michael O'Hara	J. A. O'Rourke